

# FOSTER COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

6720 Highway 200  
Carrington, ND 58421

Phone: 701-652-2551 ext. 3  
Fax: 855-888-6970

E-mail:  
dionn.schaaf@nd.nacdnet.net

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*"Fostering" Our Natural  
Resources*

For descriptions of trees and shrubs  
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[www.ag.ndsu.edu/trees/handbook.htm](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/trees/handbook.htm)

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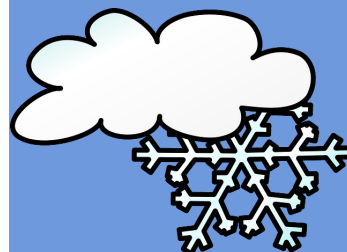
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### LEADING EDGE EQUIPMENT

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Issue No. 75

Winter 2016



FOSTER COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# Conservation Communicator

## It's All About The Roots

It's my turn to write the article for our newsletter. I skipped a year so it should be easy coming up with something for most people, but that would not include me. I am going to cheat a bit and use some information from the Corn + Soybean Digest. A very excellent magazine and I'm sure most of you have read it from cover to cover, so this will be just a refresher for you.

Half of our organic matter or OM has been lost over the last 100 years. The biggest decline occurred in the first 10- 20 years after the sod was broken up. Most of the OM is composed of carbon from roots rather than surface residue. It's important to note that OM does not like tillage. Go sample soil from a long time fence row, and then from the adjacent field. It will give you some idea of how much OM was lost. Less tillage, more roots will help to increase OM.

No-till with the help of cover crops will increase OM by 0.1-0.2% per year or 1% in 10 years. That extra 1% increases nutrients and water available to cash crops. That 1% contains 1,000 pounds of N per acre in the top 12 inches. On the average, 30 pounds is available to the crop each year, or about \$10 worth of fertilizer. Each 1% of OM also can store 16,000 gallons of water in the top 12 inches of soil per year. "A 2% increase in OM is equivalent to 1.25-inch of rain in August"

Cereal Rye has shone as a cover crop: it can be planted late in the fall, is winter hardy, is easy to kill, and controls weeds. It has a great root system that will grow through plow pan, helping water infiltration and preventing compaction. One farmer calls it his "chisel plow." This spring I seeded soybeans into three foot tall Rye stubble, and this fall I seeded a cover crop combination of rye, lentils, hairy vetch, forage radish, purple top turnips, and sweet clover. After soybean harvest I seeded Rye into the stubble; it will be used for spring grazing.

Cover crops are great in retaining Nitrogen, and also keep carbon in the soil by harvesting sunlight. Corn and soybeans harvest the sun for 90 days; cover crops will extend that period until freeze up. The sun is a free resource - why not plant a cover crop, collect that energy, and inject carbon into the soil.

"It's all about the cover crop roots. They anchor the soil and nutrients, and build structure and organic matter."

Curtiss Klein  
SCD Supervisor



Foster County SCD 2015 Supervisors, Advisors and Staff	
Chairman Curtiss Klein	701-653-5708
Vice Chair Robert House	674-3606
Supervisor Cody Montgomery	652-5397
Supervisor Karl Hoppe	650-8810
Supervisor Marie Pozarnsky	652-1169
NRCS District Conservationist Paul DuBourt	652-2551 Ext 101
Soil Con. Tech. Nichole Johnson	Ext 112
SCD Manager Dionn Schaaf	Ext 102
SCD Ed. Coordinator Jill Vigesaa	701-799-5488
Foster County Extension Agent Joel Lemer	652-2581

### Till it to me Straight....

- *Foster County Soil Conservation District Board meetings are tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Feb. 8 and March 14, and 8:30 a.m. on April 11 (2nd Mondays). The March meeting is scheduled to be held at the Farmer's Café in Kensal. Please contact the district office at 652-2551 to confirm dates and times.*
- *USDA Service Center will be closed for President's Day on Monday, February 15.*
- *"Talking Dirt" on KDAK (1600 AM) will be at 8:40 am on February 3, March 2, and April 6 (first Wednesdays).*
- *ND Forest Service windbreak renovation grant pre-applications for 2017 tree plantings are due March 15.*
- *Applications for the 2016 NRCS Honey Bee Pollinator Effort and the Prairie Pothole Wetland and Grassland Retention Project are due February 19th.*



2015 Foster County SCD Highlights

January

Talking Dirt on KDAK with DuBourt, Schaaf, and Schafer Marie Pozarnsky and Karl Hoppe re-appointed as SCD Supervisors.

Staff attend Morton County SCD Winter Workshop Newsletter mailed out

February

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf and Schafer Conservation planning ongoing

March

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf, DuBourt, and Lemer ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts Area I meeting held in Grand Forks

District purchases 420 bushel manure spreader



NRCS hosts Winter Soil Health Workshop at Crossroads Golf Course

District sponsors five Project TREES presentations at Carrington Grade School

Schaaf attends NDCDEA Tree Promotion meeting in Bismarck Staff attend Watershed Coordinators Meeting in Bismarck

April

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Klein, Schaaf, and Schafer Kelly Creek Watershed water sampling begins for 2015 Newsletter mailed out and annual report published Women’s Ag Day – “Agriculture: The Foundation of Our Community”

District sponsors and provides materials for Stewardship Week at meeting attended by Carrington Ministerial Association. Stewardship materials provided to schools

Local “Keep ND Clean” poster contest winners receive tree certificates.

May

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Hoppe

District holds a Carrington Arbor Day tree planting honoring the first graders – Carrington Class of 2026.



District begins planting trees and shrubs.

Pozarnsky and Schaaf assist with Progressive Ag Safety Day Schafer leaves district staff; Schaaf becomes Watershed Coordinator

District sponsor two Midkota High School teams to enter the state Envirothon; Midkota takes 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place.

District plants pollinator demonstration plot by tree shed Project TREES completes 458 school programs during the school year reaching 27,216 students across North Dakota.

June

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf

Root view boxes with cover crop seed displayed at Runnings Excess conservation grade tree and shrub sale held after tree planting season.

SCD sponsors informational booth at Foster County Fair

Weed barrier fabric application completed.

July

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Klein and Schaaf

District’s new manure spreader in Independence Day parade Tree orders and conservation planning for spring of 2016 begin.

NRCS and SCD staff attend Toolkit 8 training in Jamestown

August

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf and DuBourt

District’s manure spreader used in calibration demonstration at Carrington Research Extension Center’s Nutrient Management Workshop

Newsletter mailed out

September

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf and Lemer

District enters into contribution agreement with NRCS

Midkota and Carrington sixth grade students attend Eco-Ed Day at Juanita Lake



Kelly Creek Watershed Project annual report completed.

October

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Klein and Schaaf

Carrington Tree Board meeting

November

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Schaaf

Newsletter mailed out

Montgomery and Schaaf attend NPS Task Force meeting in Bismarck

Kelly Creek Watershed water sampling completed for 2015

District website redone for transfer to new web host

ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts annual meeting held in Bismarck.

December

Talking Dirt on KDAK with Lemer

Casoron herbicide application on tree and shrub plantings Central Dakota Ag Day at Carrington Research Extension Center

including soil health sessions; DuBourt presents Rainfall Simulator demonstration

2016 NACD and NDASCD dues paid

2015 NRCS Programs – Applied Conservation in Foster County

Cover Crop (340)	16,608 acres
Conservation Cover (327)	91 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation (328)	7,078 acres
Fence (382)	25,759 feet
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)	82 acres
Forage Harvest Management (511)	539 acres
Integrated Pest Management (595)	32,895 acres
Irrigation Management (WQT)	150 acres
Livestock Pipeline (516)	5,988 feet
No-till/Minimum Till (SOE)	1 1,647 acres
Nutrient Management (590)	74.587 acres
Prescribed Grazing (528)	4,991 acres
Pumping Plant (533)	2
Residue Management (329, 329B. 345)	8,534 acres
Water Well (642)	2
Watering Facility (614)	8
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)	14,100 feet
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)	840 feet



A reminder to anyone interested in implementing Best Management Practices through the Kelly Creek Watershed Project: We need to hear from you soon! The project ends this year. This winter is your last chance to plan in order to have funding set aside for you for spring and summer of 2016. Please contact Dionn at 652-2551 ext. 3.

2015 SCD Conservation Activities

SCD 2015 Field Activities	
64,599 feet of trees machine planted (8249 trees)	
223 trees hand planted	
65,866 feet of weed barrier fabric laid	
3,010 feet of Casoron application	
528 tree shelters installed	
Kelly Creek Watershed Applied Conservation	
Pasture/hayland Planting (512)	15 acres
Fence (382)	2900 feet

District Services and Rates

**Foster County Soil Conservation District provides the following services:**

*Machine tree planting* (cost includes trees)  
\$30.00 per 100 linear feet  
\$300.00 minimum, \$2 per mile office-to-site fee if site is not properly prepared

*Custom Handplant Replacement*  
\$3.00 per tree with 50 tree minimum

*Weed barrier application* (cost includes fabric)  
\$0.50 per linear foot < 2500 feet  
\$0.45 per linear foot > 2500 feet  
\$300 minimum,  
No-till on properly prepared sites an additional 5¢ per foot

*Chemical weed control application* (Casoron granular herbicide for tree plantings)  
Price/pound plus \$0.125/linear foot,  
or \$50.00 minimum plus chemical

*Between-row cultivation for weed control*  
\$30.00 per 100 linear feet  
\$300.00 minimum

*Tree shelter application*  
\$2.00 per tree plus cost of tube and stake, 35 tree minimum

**The district is also a source for the following (all prices subject to change):**

*Manure Spreader for lease:*  
Approximately 420 bushels/load, \$300 per day with \$500 cleaning/repair deposit

*Conservation grade handplant trees*  
Prices vary, but most are available for \$2 per tree or \$35 for a bundle of 25 trees

*6’ Fabric Weed Barrier*  
300’ Roll for \$95.00  
Custom Cut for \$0.40 per linear foot

*Plantskydd Deer Repellent*  
Spray-on: 1 qt ready-to-spray \$18.50  
1 lb powder for mixing 1 gallon \$23.00  
Granular: 1 lb granular shaker \$9.50  
3 lb granular shaker pack \$21.00

*Tree Shelter Products: Tubes, Stakes, and Wraps*  
Several sizes and styles available:  
Acorn, Plantra, and Tubex brands – call for price

*Rain Barrels, Rain Barrel Kits, and Rain Barrel Parts*  
Rain barrel (white) \$37.00 Diverter kit \$21.95  
Spigot \$7.50 Connector kit \$7.45  
Rain barrel and diverter \$59.00  
Complete rain barrel kit (white, with diverter) \$48.45  
Unaltered food-grade barrel \$19.00 (white) or 26.00 (black)

**Spring field crew needed!**

Machine and hand planting trees, and application of weed barrier fabric and tree tubes. Hours vary, often based on weather. Work usually occurs mainly in May and June. If interested, please call 652-2551 ext. 3.

